

## **KaroEcho June 5, 2019 Executive Board Meeting**

El Cerrito Natural Foods Annex

Present: Hal KK6NDF, Larry KK6GIO, Howdy KE6BEE, Don NI6A, and Guest Chris Hilliard (new AC for EC1)

### **Don's Statement of "Hope"**

Are we spinning our wheels with CERT as it is presently (dis)-organized? This discussion was led by Don. In short, if CERT is not ready for us (and may never be ready, then why bother? A brief discussion regarding the purpose of KaroEcho supporting CERT's needs ensued. Other than Ken6 and EC9 no other CERT area has come forth in the past 5 years asking for comms or coordination with KaroEcho. Since El Cerrito/Kensington CERT is missing half of its Area Coordinators and has no disaster plan at the moment, Don was questioning the wisdom of serving an agency that really doesn't exist except other than in our minds. In short, is KaroEcho wasting its time and energy? The general sense of the board was that KaroEcho should proceed with building a practical emergency comms network in the hope that EC/KEN CERT gets its act together before a disaster, even though we have no idea where to send our ham communicators except for EC9 and Ken6.

### **Treasurer's Report, Finance, and Funding:**

Larry reported that there was a surplus of \$400 and one new dues paying member, Karin Hart; KM6LJB, whose PO Box is in El Cerrito, but who lives in Richmond. The single largest source income was from passing the hat around the general meeting room. KaroEcho has 18 dues paying members.

A long discussion centered on the ins and outs of writing grants and finding a grant writer. Ideas were shared by Hal and Larry.

Don mentioned that another source of income would be to go to local businesses and service clubs to ascertain gifts to support such projects as outdoor antenna weather proof lockboxes for Tassajara Park and Harding School. Additional projects could be antenna installations at all the clubhouses, GMRS antennas, a portable GMRS repeater, a portable ham repeater, more portable go-karts, etc. It was decided to discuss this at the general meeting and get a sense from the membership.

### **OUTREACHMEMBERSHIP Committee**

Don mentioned that the Fire Department was still willing to do a mailing to all hams in EC/KEN as soon as we present the contents to Chief Janes for approval. Hal said that he will email Karen, KK6ZPM, membership chairperson, so that she can report

the status of the mailing at the general meeting.

Don suggested that his #1 priority is to establish a mechanism to send out the pre-existing colorful 1 page brochure to all newly licensed hams in Kensington and El Cerrito each month, which averages anywhere from 1-3 new hams in EC/KEN per/month. The names and addresses of new ham licensees are published each month and are easily obtained.

#2 was a letter with a short questionnaire to ALL licensed hams in El Cerrito and Kensington, clearly indicating that KAROECHO is under new management and has been reorganized. This would accomplish three goals.

a) recruit experienced and active hams who have left KAROECHO in the past because of its prior disorganization and often antagonistic demeanor. By active they are already trained and have radios; but simply do not participate in emergency comms because of past negative experiences.

b) it will reach out to all the new hams licensed in the past few years as well.

c) it will cost zero, as the fire department has already said that they would pay for a mailing (their only requirement is to approve of the letter and questionnaire. I will volunteer to write the letter and questionnaire.

These two (#1 and #2 above) are easily done and promise a good return on investment (ROI).

There is an additional problem in EC/KEN in notifying new CERT trainees how to connect radio wise as there is no communications module being taught in EC/KEN CERT training. At present the EC/KEN CERT policy is to never give out the telephone numbers, email, or addresses of CERT trainees or graduates; hence your item c would only be possible by EC/KEN CERT allowing us to pass out handouts or make announcements at future CERT trainings, like Howdy and Larry did during the last training. We have proposed a disaster communications module for EC/KEN to Chef Grupalo; but so far it has been ignored. Don's conclusion that due to EC CERTs state of unconcern FRS/GMRS training is impractical at this time.

Don suggested that a general marketing/PR approach would be most logical and effective. For example, we had SETs in Sept 2018 and Feb 2019, and an area wide FRS/GMRS CERT disaster Communications workshop in June 2019; but we failed to get announcements out to the general community. El Cerrito for example has a printed newsletter that goes out to every resident in El Cerrito; but there is no mention of our events before or after. The City Manager sends out a bi-weekly report electronically and also announces major events in El Cerrito. Kensington has a bi-weekly newsletter and also various public service groups that do mass e-mailing; but we have not attempted to notify these groups about our events, and hence stir interest in joining KaroEcho or attending our dimly attended FRS/GMRS CERT training held on June 4. That is, the EC/KEN attendees numbered less than 10, while Berkeley and Richmond accounted for more than 20 attendees.

Another consideration is to publicize more widely the ham tests and classes in our area, such as the KaroEcho and EBARC jointly co-sponsored technician class and license test held at Arlington Park Clubhouse. The technician class test will be given on June 12; but Don stated that there was no plan to pass out KaroEcho brochures. There are many such opportunities to reach out to new members that KaroEcho chronically ignores. Hence the linkage between PR, Marketing, and membership should not be ignored.

In that regard, Don mentioned that he has run out of steam for a potentially large recruitment tool; i.e., KaroEcho's sponsorship a ham cram locally and precede that with a massive marketing campaign so that the entire community is notified. Don stated that it was more than he can handle at the present. Maybe someone else can take that one?

### **Website:**

Status of the non-profit status of the karoecho website (a google Gsuite site) was discussed in order to obtain a financial break on the website's fees. We also need a backup administrator. Hal volunteered to contact Rob to move this item forward.

### **Our Clients**

Howdy reported that Chris Jones (EC Parks and Rec director) has been busy, but has promised to respond "shortly" to our request to permit the installation of outdoor antennas and weatherproof lockable patch cord lock boxes at the park clubhouses. Don stated that if they say no, then we have no alternative than to remove our equipment; as we are denied access to the equipment during a disaster at present. Howdy was more positive.

El Cerrito is rewriting its disaster plan. Dave Gibson is in charge. Don mentioned that it was an opportune time to get CERT written into the plan in a functional way; and hence KaroEcho. Hal said that he would follow through with Chief Gibson in that regard. Chris Hilliard, AC of EC1, is becoming involved writing a CERT disaster plan and perhaps integrate that with a CERT Communications plan. The board was reminded that KaroEcho has its own communications disaster plan.

Hal agreed to pick up the float charger and antenna from EC FD for the go-kart. Don said that we need a centrally located place to store the Karo-Echo go-kart that will be readily accessible. Hal will put this on the general meeting's agenda.

Don and Howdy are honing a FEMA module 9 (Communications Module) for EC/KEN should the CERT program desire to sponsor it.

Don mentioned that he would contact El Cerrito Urgent Care on Moeser and San Pablo as a potential new client. Don will inquire if they want back up radio communications to the hospital net, the EOC, and CERT neighborhoods via KaroEcho. Would they be interested in putting up an outdoor roof antenna?

A lively discussion regarding fires and earthquakes ensued. Two members stated that fires always accompanied earthquakes. Don, stated to the contrary and mentioned the largest earthquake to hit the Bay Area in the past 100 years, Loma Prieta earthquake which occurred during the dry season (Oct 17 at 5:04 in the afternoon) and there were no extensive fires. Likewise Don stated that earthquakes are not banned from occurring during the winter months in torrential rains. The likelihood of fires then would be most unlikely. Don felt that this was cogent point, because evacuation should not be a SOP.

Respectfully submitted.

Don, NI6A June 8, 2019